

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 IO-03 ISO-00 /007 R

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DRAFTED BY: L/UNA:RJBETTAUER

APPROVED BY: IO/EKAHN

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R 142301Z SEP 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 183872

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (ADDRESSEE)

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO GENEVA, SEP 13, FROM
STOCKHOLM RPTD TO YOU:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 3257

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: ICRC, PFOR, MILL, PINS, SW

SUBJECT: 22ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF RED CROSS, TEHRAN,
NOV. 7-16, 1973

REF: A. STATE 164766; B. STATE 177463; C. GENEVA 4529;

D. S.M. SCHWEBEL MEMCON OF JULY 30, 1973

SUMMARY: MFA OFFICIALS VOLUNTEER TO EMBOFF CONFIRMATION
THAT SWEDEN WILL DRIVE HARD AT INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS
CONFERENCE IN TEHRAN FOR ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION ON CON-
VENTIAL WEAPONS. THEY PROMISE COMPREHENSIVE FILL-IN
ON SWEDISH INTENTIONS WHEN PLANS ARE MADE FINAL NEXT
WEEK. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT DEPARTMENT PROVIDE EMBASSY
RELEVANT BACKGROUND MATERIAL AND CONSIDER WHETHER INSTRUC-
TIONS SHOULD BE PROVIDED EMBASSY FOR PROJECTED NEXT
MEETING WITH MFA OFFICIALS ON SUBJECT. END SUMMARY.

1. MFA OFFICIALS HANS BLIX AND AXEL EDELSTAM BROUGHT
UP SUBJECT CONFERENCE TO EMBOFF IN POINTED FASHION
DURING LUNCHEON IN HONOR OF A VISITING VIP. THEY
EMPHASIZED GOS WANTED USG TO KNOW ITS INTENTIONS FULLY,
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AND REQUESTED EMBOFF TO CALL AT MFA NEXT WEEK FOR BRIEF-

ING ON SWEDISH PLANS. MEANWHILE THEY MADE FOLLOWING
GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

2. GOS WILL PRESS VERY HARD FOR SOME KIND OF PROVISION
OR CONVENTION ON CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS WHICH THEY HOPE
WILL BE TABLED AT TEHRAN IN FORM OF RESOLUTION. SWEDES DO NOT
NECESSARILY INSIST THAT CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS BE MADE PART OF
ALREADY EXISTING DRAFT PROTOCOLS, OR OF A RESOLUTION INVOLVING
DRAFT PROTOCOLS. THEY WOULD BE AMENABLE TO SEPARATE
PROTOCOL WHICH COULD BE DISCUSSED SEPARATELY. SWEDES
ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN A PROTOCOL BANNING NAPALM
AND HIGH-VELOCITY BULLETS.

3. BLIX SAID HE KNOWS ICRC OFFICIALS ARE NOT KEEN ON
BRINGING UP ANYTHING OF SUCH CONTROVERSIAL NATURE AT
TEHRAN. HE SAID ICRC PEOPLE TOLD HIM RED CROSS HAS NO
ANY DIFFICULT MATTERS IT HOPES TO GET SETTLED THAT THEY
WOULD RISK LOSING WHOLE BAG IF SWEDEN AND OTHERS INSIST
ON GOING TOO FAR. BLIX TOLD EMBOFF SWEDEN INTENDS TO PUSH
AHEAD ANYWAY, BUT IS WILLING TO DISCUSS MATTER BEFORE
CONFERENCE. BLIX EMPHASIZED ATTITUDE OF USG WOULD BE
CRUCIAL. EMBOFF SAID HE HAD NO SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS
RE USG ATTITUDE BEYOND HIS FEELING THAT WE ARE INTER-
ESTED IN HAVING CONSTRUCTIVE RESOLUTIONS PASSED BUT WE
MIGHT WELL HAVE SERIOUS RESERVATIONS ABOUT SPECIFIC
PROPOSALS ON CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS SUCH AS HIGH-VELOCITY
BULLETS. EMBOFF THANKED MFA OFFICIALS FOR THEIR FRANK-
NESS AND ASSURED THEM WE WOULD WELCOME BRIEFING ON THEIR
SPECIFIC PROPOSALS.

4. AT LATER POINT IN LUNCHEON CONVERSATION EDELSTAM
SAID SWEDEN WOULD BRING UP ITS CONVENTIONAL WARFARE
PROPOSALS AT UNGA BUT WAS NOT PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED
WITH THAT FORUM OR CCD AS VEHICLE FOR ACHIEVING ANYTHING
PRACTICAL. ANY FORA SUCH AS CCD WHICH DEPEND UPON CON-
SENSUS VOTES WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO AGREE ON A USEFUL
PROTOCOL. IT IS FOR THAT REASON THAT ICRC WITH ITS
TWO-THIRDS RULE COULD BE VEHICLE FOR ACHIEVING PROGRESS.
HE SAID EVEN IF MAJOR STATES DID NOT GO ALONG AT FIRST,
THEY MIGHT FEEL COMPELLED LATER, SUCH AS HAD HAPPENED
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IN CASE OF PROHIBITION OF DUM-DUM BULLETS. AS FINAL
REMARK ON THIS SUBJECT THE MFA DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL
AFFAIRS WACHTMEISTER SAID A PRIMARY CONSIDERATION FOR
SWEDEN IS TO AVOID ANY LINKING OF THIS HUMANITARIAN
MATTER TO CONTENTIOUS CURRENT OR RECENT ISSUES. SPECI-
FICALLY, HE SAID, SUCH A DISCUSSION SHOULD NOT BE MADE
TO APPEAR AS A JUDGEMENT UPON THE UNITED STATES FOR
VIETNAM BEHAVIOR. ON CONTRARY HE SAID IT IS HOPED US

EXPERIENCE IN VNETNAM, THE ATTENDANT WAR-WEARINESS THAT HE HAD BEEN READING ABOUT, AND FACT US WAS NO LONGER IN COMBAT WOULD MAKE IT NOW MORE POSSIBLE FOR USG TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER THESE FURTHER MEASURES TO ELIMINATE HUMAN SUFFERING.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: ONLY INFORMATION IN EMBASSY FILES ON TEHRAN CONFERENCE IS CONTAINED IN CITED REFTELS. REQUEST DEPT. PROVIDE EMBASSY REQUESTED BACKGROUND (BY TELEGRAM IF POSSIBLE), PARTICULARLY MATERIAL ON ICRC DRAFT PROTOCOLS ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW. ALSO REQUEST DEPT. CONSIDER PROVIDING EMBASSY GUIDANCE FOR NEXT ROUND OF DISCUSSION WITH MFA. FYI, EMBASSY BELIVES SWEDEN WILL PRESS FORWARD ON THIS ISSUE EVEN IF PALME GOVERNMENT IS UPSET IN SEPT. 16 LECTON. OLSEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 SEP 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: collinp0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE183872
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: L/UNA:RJBETTAUER
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS BETTAUER
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730933/aaaaaxtx.tel
Line Count: 132
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN L
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. STATE 164766; B. STATE 177463; C.
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: collinp0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27-Sep-2001 by thigpegh>; APPROVED <28 FEB 2002 by collinp0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: 22ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF RED CROSS, TEHRAN, NOV. 7-16, 1973
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, PINS, SW
To: STOCKHOLM
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005